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Prairie Publications



EDUCATION



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Bank of North Dakota Announces Interest Rate Reduction for Student Loans Paid via Automatic Payment Withdrawal

The Industrial Commission today approved a student loan borrower benefit of a .25% interest rate reduction on Bank of North Dakota (BND) student loans and loans BND services on behalf of the North Dakota Student Loan Trust. Student loans that qualify for this reduction must be paid by automatic payment withdrawal from a checking or savings account. This borrower benefit will take effect January 1, 2003 and be available to current and new participants who choose to use this repayment method.

“Using the automatic payment withdrawal saves time, money and interest for the student loan borrower,” said Governor Hoeven. “There is also the added benefits of convenience and assurance of timely payments.”

“By choosing this payment alternative, students are assured the ease and convenience of repaying their student loan along with peace of mind that their payment will be on time,” said Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. “In the end, the borrower will save money with the .25% interest rate reduction and also by avoiding possible late fees.”

“North Dakota historically leads the nation with the lowest student loan default rate.” Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson said, “Automatic payment helps ensure students pay their loan on time; thereby helping Student Loans of North Dakota, a division of BND, maintain its low default rate.”

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Student loan borrowers still have the option to make their payments by writing a check. Currently, 13% of BND student loan borrowers and 9.32% of North Dakota Student Loan Trust borrowers utilize automatic payment. There is a total of approximately 55,000 student loan borrowers between BND and the North Dakota Student Loan Trust.

“Bank of North Dakota continues its commitment to remain a financial services leader in the state of North Dakota,” said Eric Hardmeyer, president of BND. “By offering this borrower benefit, we continue our mission of providing progressive services to our customers.”

Loans eligible for this borrower benefit include Stafford, Unsubsidized Stafford, Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), and Dakota Education Alternative Loan (DEAL)—the state-funded alternative loan.

As the only state-owned bank in the nation, Bank of North Dakota is overseen by the Industrial Commission of North Dakota, consisting of Governor John Hoeven as Chairman, Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem and Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson.

Borrowers should contact BND at 1-800-472-2166 ext. 5660 or e-mail bndsl@state.nd.us for eligibility requirements.

MPN Serial Process to be Extended to All Schools

A recent Dear Colleague Letter (GEN-02-10) from the Department of Education (DOE), located at <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/Gen0210.html>, explains that most United States schools will be permitted to use the multi-year function of the Master Promissory Note (MPN) beginning March 1, 2003. Previously, this feature was generally only available to student and parent borrowers at four-year institutions and graduate or professional schools.

The letter states that unless a school is specifically informed otherwise, all schools participating in the FFEL or Direct Loan programs that are located in the United States may allow their student (and parent borrowers under the soon to be released PLUS MPN) to use the multi-year feature of the MPN. Borrowers attending foreign schools may not use the multi-year feature of the MPN unless DOE specifically informs the school that its borrowers may use the multi-year feature.

DOE is urging participants to help make students aware of the process.

*Wally Erhardt, Assoc. Director of Operations
SLND-Guarantor*

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Administered by Bank of North Dakota
overseen by Industrial Commission of North Dakota

GOVERNOR
John Hoeven

ATTORNEY GENERAL
Wayne Stenehjem

AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER
Roger Johnson

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By Student Loans of North Dakota-Guarantor is a newsletter circulated to lenders, college financial aid and admissions personnel, high school guidance counselors, other guaranty agencies, and individuals needing information about student loans. *All articles are of the writer's opinion and should not be construed as Student Loans of North Dakota policy unless so stated.*

Cancellation/Revision Update

With the move to production of *Reallocation* on December 11, 2002, this completes SLND's work on Cancellation/Revision Web enhancements. We are pleased to announce that the various Cancellation/Revision functions usage by our schools is at dramatic levels.

One tip worth mentioning is that the *Reallocation* feature is to be used only when a loan has been partially or fully disbursed; otherwise, use the *Revision* feature. The system is built with a number of edits which will assist you through each process, making all transactions easy to complete.

If your financial aid office does not currently have Cancellation/Revision Web access on our Web site, please e-mail me at werhardt@state.nd.us or call 1-800-472-2166 ext. 5654 to request access. If you have questions regarding the Cancellation/Revision process, please e-mail Jeanne Thomas at jthomas@state.nd.us or call 1-800-472-2166 ext. 5761.

*Wally Erhardt, Associate Director of Operations
SLND-Guarantor*

Financial Aid Presentation Available at mystudentloanonline.com

The 2003 financial aid PowerPoint presentation has been revised and is available for financial aid offices to use by downloading the presentation from mystudentloanonline.com, SLND's Web site. This presentation contains valuable information about the financial aid process, applying for a PIN, and the types of financial aid. To access and/or download the presentation:

- 1) Go to mystudentloanonline.com and click on the link "*FAFSA and Financial Aid Presentation*" found under the "*Highlights*" section on the right side of the page.
- 2) Follow the instructions on the "*Financial Aid Presentation*" page.

For those who do not have Microsoft PowerPoint, but would like to use the presentation for financial aid sessions or class presentations, there is a financial aid presentation kit available from College Information Service (CIS). This kit contains transparencies of the presentation, including speaker notes. Please contact CIS at 1-800-554-2717 to request one. Due to the large number of requests, we do ask that you return the transparencies to us after using them.

Also, please remember the FREE financial aid and college planning materials from College Information Service that are available for your financial aid nights. Please contact CIS to request these materials.

*Tammy Carlson, Coordinator
College Information Service*

NDASFAA Update

Happy Holidays! I hope you all had a restful holiday break. Now it is time to gear up for the new year. This year will be an exciting one for me. I look forward to working with all of you as 2003 NDASFAA President.

Let me start by first introducing to you the **2003 NDASFAA Board**:

Katie Nettell, Lake Region State College – President

Bob Parisien, United Tribes Technical College – President Elect

Lynn Aaberg, Williston State College – Past President

Don Flaherty, Trinity Bible College – Secretary

Ruth Gress, Dickinson State University – Treasurer

Jackie Payne, Wells Fargo – Associate Member at Large

Working for NDASFAA as board members is an honor, but it also takes a good chunk of time. I wish to extend a large thank you to each of these individuals for giving their time to serve on the board. A special thanks to Lynn Aaberg for all the work she has done this past year as President. She has left big shoes to fill.

My goals for this year are simple. The first goal is to build committees to support the purposes of the organization. I encourage every member to volunteer for a committee. You can read more about NDASFAA and the committees on the NDASFAA Web site: www.ndasfaa.org (click on Governing Personnel).

The second goal is to promote professional growth and develop strong leaders in the area of financial aid in North Dakota. The opportunity for both is available within the NDASFAA organization. Opportunities range from chairing a NDASFAA Committee to being a trainer for Decentralized Training. The key is to get involved.

One place to get involved is the NDASFAA Conference. Mark your calendars for the 2003 NDASFAA Annual Conference that will be held April 9-11 in Fargo. Decentralized Training will be held in conjunction with the conference on April 8 and 9. Watch for more information.

In closing, I wish everyone a safe and happy new year. I look forward to serving you this year as the NDASFAA President and welcome all comments, ideas, and suggestions.

Katie Nettell, President - NDASFAA

Upcoming Events

Marketplace

Grand Forks - January 16 - Alerus Center

North Dakota Credit Union League Annual Convention

Bismarck - February 6-8 - Ramkota Hotel

Spotlight on SLND!

Beginning with this issue of *Prairie Publications*, SLND will be featuring two of its employees each month so that you can become familiar with the “faces of the voices behind the phone!”

Jeanne Thomas

When financial aid officers call SLND to cancel or revise a student's loan, they hear a friendly, petite voice on the other end. That voice belongs to

Jeanne Thomas, who has been the contact for cancellation/revisions for the past three years. “Talking to financial aid officers on the phone is a fun aspect of my job.” states Jeanne. “It's always nice to visit with financial aid officers and get to know them.”

Nine years ago, Jeanne joined SLND as a temporary clerk. Shortly thereafter, she became the receptionist in the Customer Service area and then moved to the New Loans area in December 1995. Providing friendly, reliable customer service is very important to Jeanne.

Away from work, Jeanne enjoys the activity and excitement of her two children: Hallie - 6 ½ and Noah - 2. “It's never a dull moment at home with them.” Jeanne says with a chuckle.



Cheryl Storhaug

Cheryl Storhaug should be very popular with many students. While most borrowers who fund their student loans at SLND will never see or even hear

her, she plays an important role in their educational future.

Cheryl has been employed at SLND for seven years, five of them in the New Loans area. Her duties include providing guidance and customer service to borrowers, loan processing, and the disbursement of student loan funds. She enjoys working with her co-workers and finds her job rewarding. “It's nice to be able to help people pursue their educational goals.” said Cheryl. “Going to college has never been more important.”

When away from the office, Cheryl keeps busy with her three children and three grandchildren. She enjoys country and oldies music, movies, concerts, and Broadway musicals—particularly *Phantom of the Opera*. Other interests are flying and spaceflight. Some of her fondest memories include having the opportunity to view two space shuttle launches in Orlando, Florida; and, being a guest on a military aircraft, while she was a member of the Civil Air Patrol, which refueled the Air Force precision flying team, the *Thunderbirds*, in flight!